



## ***APA Iowa 2023 Work Plan***

The American Planning Association Iowa Chapter (APA Iowa) is a membership organization of approximately four hundred professional planners, planning educators, planning commissioners and planning students from across the state of Iowa. APA Iowa's mission is to strengthen planning to create thriving communities. We do this through celebration, advocacy, relationships, and education of our members and communities.

This document outlines APA Iowa's work plan for 2023 which was developed through a *Strategic Doing* process conducted in November 2021 and reevaluated regularly when new projects are undertaken. Attendees were provided the following framing question to guide the strategic discussion:

*Imagine if the APA-IA Chapter was the model organization within Iowa and for APA chapters across the country for recruitment, engagement, and value add. What would that look like?*

The Board identified assets they have available to them that they thought could contribute to the future state articulated in the framing question and considered how those assets could be linked, leveraged, and aligned to point to new strategic opportunities. The following three strategic Opportunities emerged from the discussion:

1. **APA-IA = Your Planning Resource (Add Value)**  
The Chapter should become the resource for planning advice, guidance, and learning. This includes improving our external perception outside of Iowa as well as leveraging our capacity as experts in planning within the state.
2. **APA-IA = Your Planning Connection (Relationships)**  
The Chapter should increase relationships within the planning community, with youth, and with outside organizations.
3. **APA-IA = Your Planning Operations (Administrative)**  
The Chapter should improve their operations through improved messaging, organization, and marketing. Improvements to the website and communication channels should better tell the story on who we are and why you should be a member.

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Characteristic	Success Metric
Education opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- # sessions at Annual Conference</li> <li>- Increase number of annual sessions on legislative issues and advocacy</li> <li>- creation of resources for members on local issues i.e. model ordinances on current topics</li> <li>- Monthly Planning on Tap sessions</li> <li>- # CM opportunities offered</li> <li>- Creation of newsletter content</li> </ul>
Policy & Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Membership outreach and education (legislative alerts)</li> <li>- External audience education (legislators or decision makers)</li> <li>- Resource for legislators to help draft topics of interest and other advocacy organizations</li> <li>- Creation of Legislative committee with champions across APA IA for policy topics</li> <li>- Develop “How to interact with legislators 101 – form letters, search for legislators, policy guides, etc”</li> <li>- Develop “Process of when a bill becomes a law, how to effect change, funnel deadline, how bills get introduced”</li> </ul>
Enhanced Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Partner with allied organizations on more programming (AIA, ASLA, PDI, COZO, ICOG, Iowa Bicycle Coalition, INHF, League of Cities)</li> <li>- # of partner programs offered</li> </ul>

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Characteristic	Success Metric
Increased Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of members</li> <li>- Retention rate once members are paying full dues amount (i.e. students who continue membership once they are professionals)</li> <li>- Out of state memberships</li> </ul>
Increased Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Website hits</li> <li>- Newsletter shares, views</li> <li>- Social network likes, loves, shares</li> <li>- Content shared (press releases)</li> <li>- Number of times media or legislators has contacted APA-IA</li> <li>- Number of interactions with legislators</li> </ul>
Increased Opportunities for Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- # of networking events</li> <li>- # of professional development opportunities organized by APA-IA</li> <li>- # of interactions with University members/students</li> <li>- # of co-events with other professional organizations</li> <li>- Incentives for interactions on behalf of APA-IA</li> <li>- Incentives for our members to engage in other events</li> </ul>

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Characteristic	Success Metric
Increased Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Website hits</li> <li>- Newsletter shares, views</li> <li>- Social network likes, loves, shares</li> <li>- Content shared</li> </ul>
Meeting Needs of Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual satisfaction survey of members</li> <li>- Clicks on website pages &amp; resources</li> <li>- Website leveraged as a reference by allied organization</li> <li>- Event feedback on communication</li> </ul>
Clear Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One email source correspondence</li> <li>- Consistent sharing of message across platforms of message</li> <li>- Consistent branding across platforms and events</li> </ul>

A list of project ideas was developed that can fulfill the Strategic Opportunities; Your Planning Resource, Your Planning Connection, Your Planning Operations. During 2022, the Chapter Board and volunteer members have completed a series of Strategic Doing Projects including the following:

APA-IA = Your Planning Resource (Add Value)

- Planning on Tap
- Planner's Emeritus Network

APA-IA = Your Planning Connection (Relationships)

- Legislative Committee

APA-IA = Your Planning Operations (Administrative)

- Website Audit

These projects have spun into successful committees and groups that are continuing to accomplish tasks related to the original project. As projects have been completed in accordance with the success metrics established, the board has been and will continue to vote on new tasks to undertake and committees will be assigned.

During the end of 2022, a new group of projects was selected and groups are actively working to complete. Those projects include the following:

- Budget Audit & Fundraising Plan - reviewing our current budget, assessing changes and additions, and working with the Sponsorship Chair on a plan to increase funds to provide greater value to members;
- APA & Chapter Marketing Strategy - answering the question "why join APA/Chapter?" through the development of materials that better explain the benefits of joining this community of professionals; and
- Development of a Career Pathways Partnership with Community Colleges - meeting with community colleges and other partners to work towards a career pathway guide for students interested in planning.

A log of future project ideas is being kept to continue advancing the goals of the chapter using manageable and measureable outcomes. This is a dynamic process intended to create action from volunteer members.

- Operations:
  - Update 5-year Development Plan
  - Board Oath Development
  - Sponsorship Committee
  - Chapter Only Membership reevaluation
- Resource
  - Teaching Guides
  - Planners on the Job Materials
- Connection
  - Mentor Match - college/ongoing
  - Planning Ambassador Program
  - AIA Outreach - program